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Sonata V of Jan Dismas Zelenka: A Study in Style and Genre

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The music of the late baroque composer Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679-1745) was not widely circulated during his lifetime. In the late twentieth century, Zelenka's music experienced a revival due to the rediscovery of his sonatas for double reed ensemble. The thesis examines the stylistic, generic, and historical context for Zelenka's Sonata V (ZWV 181, no. 5), tracing the development of the ensemble sonata for double reeds at the Augustan court.

Chapter One focuses on Zelenka's life, as well as the purpose and dating of the six ensemble sonatas for obbligato double reeds (ZWV 181). The subsequent chapter surveys the national styles that were assimilated into the compositional traditions of the Dresden *hofkapelle* in the early 18th

century. The role of the oboist within the court musical establishment and the social status of the *hofmusicus* are discussed.

Chapter Three considers the precedents for and influences on Zelenka's Sonata V, particularly with respect to its inclusion in the little known genre of the *sonata auf concertenart*. These sonatas in the manner of a concerto adopt the formal outlines of Vivaldi's concertos and concerted sonatas while obscuring the distinctions of genre between the sonata and concerto through the treatment of scoring and texture. Zelenka's Sonata V follows the style of an early *sonate auf concertenart* of Vivaldi. Zelenka's concerted sonata departs from its model by confounding the identity of the initially distinct ritornello and solo material. The specific use of the oboe in Zelenka's sonatas, including playing techniques, and the degree of specialization are discussed.

The conclusion speculates as to why Zelenka's music quickly fell out of favor and why even the composer himself was treated in a critical manner only a few generations after his time at Dresden. An understanding of the Dresden court not only provides a window on Zelenka's music, but also explains its almost immediate eclipse following his death.

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INTRODUCTION

RE-DISCOVERY OF ZELENKA

> One is reluctant to describe Zelenka's sonata cycle as the coronation of the Baroque genre of trio sonata. To be sure, the artistic and technical standards and the sheer dimensions established in these works make the efforts of almost all of Zelenka's predecessors and contemporaries appear like mere compositional finger exercises.[1]

Thanks to an exceptional recording of Jan Dismas Zelenka's sonatas (ZWV 181) released in 1973 by Heinz Holliger, Maurice Bourgue, Klaus Thunemann, and other members of the Camerata Bern Ensemble, we know Zelenka as a composer of chamber music. The six ensemble sonatas were immediately acknowledged as significant contributions to the chamber music repertoire for oboists and bassoonists. While instrumental works constitute only one-tenth of some 150 compositions, it was the overwhelming interest of double reed players excited by the aforementioned recording, which began the revival of interest in the Bohemian composer.

Between 1955 and 1963, Camille Schoenbaum edited the instrumental works of Zelenka and Barenreiter published them. Recordings by Czechoslovakian ensembles soon followed, but were met with no exceptional response. Heinz Holliger first encountered the sonatas in a lesson with his teacher Emile Cassagnaud in 1957, and maintains a life long interest in Zelenka's works. Holliger has released several recordings of Zelenka's works

[1] Wolfgang Reich, liner notes for Jan Dismas Zelenka, *Six Sonatas for two oboes, bassoon and continuo*, Burkhard Glaetzner, Capriccio Digital 10 075.

in the last three decades, and successfully pursued the publication of new, scholarly editions of Zelenka's sonatas. The first Zelenka symposium did not take place until the 300th anniversary of his birth.[2] Archival work in the last quarter of the 20th century "added to the momentum begun by the appearance of the instrumental composition".[3] Wolfgang Reich catalogued Zelenka's oeuvre in 1985, after which several studies of the composer and his works were published. A number of substantial works, including the late masses, became available and led to performances and recordings, which in turn, aroused the interest of scholars and performers alike.

While ensemble sonatas were a standard vehicle of Baroque composers, Zelenka's sonatas demand attention in ways that conventional works in this genre do not. Zelenka pushes the limits of the concertante instruments' capacity in incredibly virtuosic solo passages, yet it is the originality of the composer's musical language that makes these sonatas extraordinary. His complete mastery of traditional polyphony, combined with the skilled use of Italian cantabile, is often interrupted by the unexpected appearance of a surprising change of harmony or a startling dissonance, which does not fit our expectations. Most importantly, the sonatas present such an intense emotional spectrum that it seems inconceivable that they were meant merely as secondary entertainments. Zelenka uses a conventional medium, but within that, defies the norm.

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[2] Janice Stockigt, *Jan Dismas Zelenka: A Bohemian Musician at the Court of Dresden* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 284.

[3] Stockigt, 284.

CHAPTER ONE

Biography

Many aspects of Zelenka's life are unknown. No personal memoirs survive, no portrait exists, and we can only speculate as to his relationships within the society in which he worked. Jan Dismas Zelenka was a Bohemian composer and violone player in Dresden at the court of Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. He was baptized as Jan Lukas Zelenka on 16 October 1679 in Luonovice, Czechoslovakia. Jiri Zelenka, Jan's father, was an organist-cantor at the Catholic parish of the small village, a position traditionally responsible for the organization of all musical activities for the church. In addition, a cantor performed music for the church, looked after the choir, and played classical music for the aristocracy as well as traditional music at village dances.[4] It has been assumed that Jiri Zelenka was the source of his son's early musical education, but no documentation regarding his musical education exists.

The majority of composers in the 18th century Bohemia were born outside of Prague, and it was in the villages that they received their fundamental music education. "The role of the village schoolmaster was vital in producing this broad base and accounts of the numerous cantors in the eighteenth century suggest a high level of musical accomplishments with a broad range

[4] *The New Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Czech Republic,"by Zygmunt M, Szweykowski.

of instrumental skills to their credit".[5] Charles Burney, several decades later, found this tradition of education unique to the Bohemian lands.

The environment in which young Zelenka grew up was greatly affected by the political and cultural situation in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. The Czech lands had been defeated by the armies of Emperor Ferdinand II in the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) after rising up in search of self determination and religious freedom. The result was that the Czech lands had been annexed by the Hapsburg group of states with its center in Vienna. Non-Catholic nobility had to convert to Catholicism or leave the country. There were few members of the ruling class that did not go into exile, and therefore, few courts in which the Czech musicians could work. They sought work in courts throughout Europe, including Dresden, where their experience with Catholic liturgy and their technical skills suited the demands of the musical establishment.

Zelenka's earliest known composition dates from 1704 and was performed in the Jesuit college of St. Nicholas in Prague.[6] Works composed for the Jesuit Collegium Clementinum have led to the assumption that Zelenka pursued his training at this institution in Prague. At the request of the Clementinum college, Zelenka composed *Statio quadruplex pro Processione Theophorica* (ZWV 158). The title page of the subsequent surviving composition provides us with the information that by 1709, Zelenka was living in the Prague

[5], Christopher Hogwood and Jan Smaczny, "The Bohemian Lands" in *The Classical Era*, Man and Music, ed. Neal Zaslaw (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1994), 196.

[6] Stockigt, 3.

household of the Bohemian noble, Baron Joseph Ludvig Hartig (1685-1749).[7] This move was significant in that Zelenka was moving to the largest cultural center in Europe, to a court that would attract the likes of Vivaldi, J.S. Bach, Telemann, and Handel.

Zelenka joined the Dresden *Hofkapelle* in 1710 or 1711, where he worked at the court of Friedrich August the First. Dresden was the seat of the Wettin family. Friedrich August I was both Elector of Saxony and, from 1697, King of Poland. In order to vie for the throne, Friedrich August converted to Catholicism so that the basic criterion of candidacy for the throne could be

[7] Jaroslav Buzga, "The Vocal Works of Jan Dismas Zelenka," *Early Music*, 9 (1981), 177-83.

met. Musicians were enlisted from Catholic centers in order to provide music for the church.

The new Catholic *Hofkirche* had been established in the middle of the devoutly Lutheran population after the conversion.[8] The new church, Chapel Royal, was established within the grounds of the Dresden court, instead of outside court precincts, in order to minimize the resistance of the staunchly Lutheran population. In 1710, the chapel came under the administration of the Jesuit Province of Bohemia, that recruited Bohemian choristers and instrumentalists in order to provide for the liturgical needs of the chapel. [9]

The city of Dresden was described as the pleasure center of Germany in a contemporary account provided by Baron von Pöllnitz.[10] Dresden was a cultural center with great musical and financial resources, able to attract and retain the finest musicians of the day. While the Elector was in residence, Dresden was active with performances of plays, operas, masquerades, comedies, hunting parties, balls, and all manner of entertainments. A combination of the architectural masterpieces, geographical location, and cultural opulence earned Dresden the nickname "Florence on the Elbe".

Zelenka joined instrumentalists from throughout Europe in the prestigious court orchestra, which was led by *Kapellmeister* Johann Christoph Schmidt

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[8] Saxon Elector Friedrich August I was also know as August II, King of Poland. His son reigned following his death (1733) and was the new Saxon Elector Friedrich August II and August III, King of Poland.

[9] Stockigt, 28.

[10] Carl Ludwig von Pöllnitz, *Des Freyherrn von Pöllnitz neue Nachrichten*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1739). Eng. trans. of sections by Edith Cuthell, *A Vagabond Courtier: From the Memoirs and Letters of Baron Charles Louis von Pöllnitz*, 2 vols. (London, 1913) 128-9.

(1664-1728) and concertmaster Jean-Baptist Volumier (c. 1670-1728). Zelenka joined an orchestra "made up of instrumentalists of the highest standard, and he saw that the technical limitations of the period could be exceeded".[11] His colleagues were musicians of the standing of Johann Georg Pisendel (1687-1755 at Dresden from 1712), Francesco Veracini (1690-1750), the oboists François La Riche (1662-1723) and Johann Christian Richter (1689-1744), and the lutenist and composer Silvius Leopold Weiss (1686-1750)[12]. These were but a few of the soloists available to Zelenka.

Zelenka was initially listed as a contrabassist in court records, but actively composed for the chapel by late 1711. His first composition for Dresden, a mass, was submitted along with a request for a one-year leave of absence in order to study composition in France and Italy. There is no evidence that the petition was granted, but he was granted a twenty five percent increase in pay as a result of the performance for the chapel. He was not to receive another increase in pay for the next eighteen years.[13]

By the time that Zelenka left Dresden in February 1716 to tour with fellow chamber musicians, he had composed one school drama, two Mass settings, two sepulcher cantatas and an offertory. The Electoral Prince (the future Friedrich August II) embarked on a visit to Venice as part of his "Grand Tour", and the musicians were retained as part of his entourage.[14] Several

[11] Dietmar Polaczek, cd liner to *Jan DismasZelenka, The Orchestral Works,* Archiv 423703-2
[12] Polaczek, 25.
[13] Stockigt, 32-33.
[14] Stockigt, 39.

instrumentalists set out for Italy as part of the crown Prince's retinue, which included violinist Johann Georg Pisendel (1687-1755), oboist Johann Christian Richter, Zelenka, and keyboardist Christian Petzold.[15] "There were three main reasons for including musicians on these trips: to provide entertainment for the Prince, who loved music; to enable him to entertain his guests as he traveled; and last but not least, to enrich the education of artists already recognized as virtuosos".[16] The education that they garnered and the music that they acquired were to have great impact on the composition of the composers at the Dresden court.

In Venice, Pisendel became a student and friend of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), who later composed concertos for multiple soloists for the instrumentalists of the Dresden *Hofkapelle*. Pisendel became Vivaldi's prime advocate in the Saxon court. Reinhard Goebel, a conductor and authority on the orchestra works written for the Dresden *Hofkapelle*, reveals this little known fact about Vivaldi:

> In his attempt to gain an appointment in a city once hailed as the Florence on the Elbe, Antonio Vivaldi dedicated a whole series of highly virtuosic violin concertos to the leader of the Dresden Court Orchestra, his former pupil Georg Pisendel. He continued through much of the rest of his life to make what might be termed compositional ouvertures to the Dresden players as a whole, even describing one of his concertos explicitly as "per l'orchestra di Dresda".[17]

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[15] Stockigt, 39.

[16] Ortrun Landmann,"The Dresden Hofkappelle during the lifetime of Johann Sebastian Bach," *Early Music*, 17 (February 1989), 17-30.

[17] Reinhard Goebel, *Concerti "per 'orchestra di Dresda"*, Musica Antiqua Köln, Archiv 446 644-2.

Pisendel also collected concertos and sonatas of Tomaso Albinoni to bring back to Dresden. Zelenka collected musical works for a set entitled *Collectaneorum Musicorum Libri Quatour*.[118.] The volumes include the works of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Girolamo Frescobaldi, Johann Froberger, Johann Joseph Fux, and Zelenka's own set of canons set over a cantus firmus by Fux. Zelenka's nine canons were short exercises of twelve bars each, and formed compositional cells on which he based many passages of his later works.[19] The Electoral Prince resided in Vienna from October 1717 to March 1719 in an effort to engage the young archduchess Maria Josepha (born December 1699), the daughter of deceased Emperor Joseph I. Zelenka was one of the musicians assembled for this visit. We know from the inscriptions in each volume that Zelenka spent at least a portion of the years 1717-1719 in Vienna. In Johann Joachim Quantz's autobiography, he states that he studied counterpoint with Zelenka in Vienna in 1717. Quantz goes on to say that Zelenka was, at that time, a student of the Viennese Imperial Kapellmeister Johann Joseph Fux.[20] Michael Talbot stated that at the conclusion of his studies with Fux, "Zelenka refined his skills to the point where, at his best, he could stand comparison with any contemporary German composer of church music".[21]

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[18] Stockigt, 41. Volume I and IV are dated 1718 from Vienna. Volumes II and III date from 1717. The date of completion is given as Feb. 10, 1719 Vienna.

[19] Stockigt, 45.

[20] Paul Nettl, *The Life of Herr Johann Joachim Quantz, as sketched by himself*, in *Forgotten Musician*, trans. Paul Mueller (New York, Philosophical Library, 1951), 290.

[21] Michael Talbot, review of *Zelenka-Dokumentation: Quellen und Materialien*, by Wolfgang Horn and Thomas Kohlhase, *Early Music* 18 (August 1990), 469.

In a petition dated November 1733, Zelenka claims that for a period of eighteen months [1718-1719], he worked in Vienna " without deriving any remuneration for my music: whereas the other royal musicians sent from here were rightly and generously provided for". While in Vienna, Zelenka composed four of his five Capriccios, as well as sacred works. The Capriccios are orchestral suites and may have been the product of a request made by the Electoral Prince for entertainment pieces.[22]

By February of 1719, Zelenka had returned to Dresden. He may have traveled to Vienna as part of the retinue for the marriage of the Electoral Prince and Maria Josepha in August of 1719. Following the arrival of the Hapsburg Electoral Princess and her court, there was a change in what had been a very discreet Jesuit mission to Saxony, which strove not to upset the Lutheran majority in Dresden. The marriage treaty ensured that the princess and her court could freely and publicly practice their faith, and music played a crucial part in this worship.[23] The Peace of Westphalia allowed the ruler to force the public to convert to the reigning noble's religion, and although this was not strictly enforced, Maria Josepha insisted on a public display of worship with all that it entailed.

Friedrich August I dismissed the Italian singers and ceased all opera production after an incident involving Heinichen and the singers. Two of the Italian singers, Matteo Berselli and castrati Senesino (Francesco Bernardi),

[22] Stockigt, 48.
[23] Ibid., 49.

accused Heinichen of incompetence in setting Italian text. They tore his music up and threw it at his feet, which created a public scandal. This event was convenient for the King, in that he could be free of the financial burden of the opera. The three singers were then free to except an offer made by Handel to sing in his opera *Rudamisto* in London.[24]

The Catholic royal chapel became the primary focus of musical attention. From 1721 until the end of the decade, the music of the chapel was directed by Heinichen, assisted by Zelenka, whose title was still royal chamber musician. Heinichen was also assisted by Giovanni Alberto Ristori (1692-1753), an Italian composer who was present at court for six years.[25] This change in the musical focus at Dresden greatly increased the workload of the church composers. With the popularity of the opera came an acquired taste for virtuosic style, which was satisfied in the church through the performance of concertante instrumental music, which was performed alongside the more traditional works.

As Heinichen's health declined during the decade, Zelenka took over many of his duties. After Heinichen's death in 1729, Zelenka continued to compose and direct the music of the royal chapel. He was not officially acknowledged by title as a court composer until 1732, and despite a request to be appointed *Kapellmeister*, was overlooked in favor of Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783). The court maintained several court composers at all times

[24] Stockigt,, 61.
[25] Ibid., 62.

who worked in conjunction with the *Kapellmeister,* or at times, with one of several *Kapellmeisters* (Heinichen, Lotti and Schmidt).

After the death of August I in 1733, and the ascension of his son to the role of elector, there were many changes made to the musical organizations in Dresden. The most profound change came with revival of opera at court. Despite trying his hand at eight arias, Zelenka was more aligned with the style of his predecessors in Venice than with the more modern Neapolitan developments. Zelenka's colleague Hasse was skilled in writing secular vocal music, and the increasing interest in the re-establishment of the opera at the Dresden court may have played a factor in his appointment. From 1731, Zelenka's compositional productivity decreased. Throughout the decade, he experienced poor health, financial difficulties, and great professional disappointment. Zelenka received no formal recognition for the musical contributions he had made to the church during the reign of the Saxon Elector and King of Poland.

Zelenka continued to compose for the court until the end of his life. He died of natural causes in December of 1745, during the occupation of Dresden by the forces of Frederick II.[26] Other than his compositions and brief mentions in court documents, little is known about him. What is acknowledged, however, is that Zelenka's role at the chapel required the composition, collection and arrangement of liturgical music. The majority of

[26] Stockigt, 227.

his compositions are sacred vocal works written to be performed within the context of the German Catholic court church. Zelenka composed twenty-one Masses, many additional mass movements, requiems, works for Holy week, forty one psalms, hymns, two Magnificats, nineteen Marian antiphons, litanies, processionals, two Te Deums, and several short liturgical pieces. In addition, he completed several secular vocal works in the early 1720's, the most ambitious of which is a melodrama written for the coronation activities surrounding the marriage of Charles VI. The instrumental compositions (six sonatas, five Capriccios, and four additional orchestral works) thus represent only a small percentage of Zelenka's total extant works.

DATING AND PURPOSE

The six sonatas (ZWV 181) appeared in print for the first time in the 1950's and 60's in the series *Hortus Musicus* edited by Camillo Schoenbaum, a publication that helped to initiate an interest in the works of Zelenka. While it seems clear that between 1718 and 1723, Zelenka wrote the majority of his instrumental music, there has been a lot of speculation as to the occasion for which the sonatas were composed. Schoenbaum hypothesized that they may have been written 1723 for coronation festivities in Prague.[27] Zelenka's works were among those performed for the events surrounding the coronation of Emperor Charles VI and Empress Elizabeth Christina as King and Queen of

[27]Geoffrey Burgess,"The Trio Sonatas of Jan Dismas Zelenka," *Journal of the International Double Reed Society*, 16 (1988), 6-18, 6.

Bohemia. Perhaps members of the group of twenty musicians who accompanied Charles from Vienna or players from Prague were involved in the trio's first performance. It is more than likely that Zelenka wrote the trios with his colleagues from the circle of leading Dresden musicians in mind. They too would have been present at the Prague festivities. On the other hand, Zelenka scholar Wolfgang Reich asserted in 1994 that these works were written solely as an intellectual exercise to illustrate the outcome of studies with Fux.[28] Similarly, Stockigt suggests that they were created to demonstrate his ability to undertake commissions for potential patrons, especially among Bohemians patrons.[29] Stockigt dates the pieces from 1720-22 and bases her findings in part, on Zelenka's use of calligraphy.[30]

Stockigt presents yet another possibility for the purpose of these sonatas: Zelenka was given the task of composing all the music for the Holy Week of 1722 for the Royal Chapel in Dresden, and it was traditional for sonatas *da chiesa* to be used during church services.[31] "Numerous sets of pairs of instrumental movements (slow-fast) which survive in Dresden have led to the conclusion that "half church sonatas" were used within the Mass (possibly during the Gospel procession)".[32] The tradition stems from the time of Pisendel's leadership of the court orchestra. Five of the six sonatas are in the

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[28] Wolfgang Reich, "The Wind Sonatas of Jan Dismas Zelenka: Structural Devices and Semantic Implication", in D. Lasocki (ed.), *A Time of Questioning: Proceedings of the International Double Reed Society Utrecht* (Utrecht: 1998), 135-52.

[29] Stockigt, 104.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 73-4.

form of sonata *da chiesa*; only the fifth sonata is in the style of an Italian concerto in three movements. The fact that the bulk of the sonatas are structured as a church sonata, comprised of four movements in slow-fast-slow-fast order, does not necessarily answer this question decisively.

Table 1.1 Zelenka's Six Sonatas (ZWV 181)

No.	Key	Scoring	Tempi	Meter	# of Bars	Notes
I	F	ob.1, 2; bn.	1. Adagio non troppo	**C**	31	Sonata á 3 in score
			2. Allegro	**C**	136	
			3. Larghetto	**3**	64	
			4. Allegro (assai)	**3**	216	assai may not be original
II	g	ob. 1, 2, bn.	1. Andante	**C**	40	b.c. in parts only
			2. Allegro	**C**	138	
			3. Andante	**3**	66	3/4 in oboe part
			4. Allegro assai	**2/4**	246	
III	B-flat	ob., vn., bn.	1. Adagio	**C**	34	
			2. Allegro	**C**	124	
			3. Largo	**12/8**	26	Segue il Allegro in score
			4. Tempo guisto	**2/4**	294	
IV	g	ob. 1, 2; bn.	1. [Andante]	**3/2**	56	No tempo indicated in score
			2. Allegro	**C**	159	b.c. á 2 Hautbois e dui Bassi
			3. Adagio		30	obligati indicated in score
			4. Allegro ma non troppo	**6/8**	236	Allegro indicated in parts only
V	F	ob. 1, 2; bn., b.c.	1. [Allegro]	**2***	172*	tempo marked in parts only
			2. [Adagio]	**C**	20	tempo marked inparts only
			3. Allegro	**3**	269	
VI	c	ob. 1, 2; bn., b.c.	1. [Andante]	**C**	29	tempo marking in parts only
			2. [Allegro]	**C**	118	tempo marking in parts only
			3. Adagio	**C**	25	
			4. [Allegro]	**3/4**	212	tempo marking in parts only

*The first movement was written in 4/4 in the score (172 bars), but the parts are barred in 2/4 (344 bars).

Despite the interest the sonatas elicited in both scholars and performers, many questions remain unanswered. Neither the score nor the parts are easily decipherable, and these sources provide conflicting details in regards to

dynamics, articulations, rhythms, and notes. In additions to not knowing precisely when or why the sonatas were composed, no information is available on whether they were written for Prague or Dresden. It is even impossible to answer the seemingly simple question of whether they were meant for sacred or secular performance.

It may be more important to find out how these pieces functioned, and up to this point, there are no definitive answers. Typically, ensemble sonatas of the early eighteenth century were written as secondary entertainments, or "background" music. Due to the complexity and emotions that Zelenka's ensemble sonatas evoke, we cannot assume that these were meant merely to supply soothing or mildly entertaining music. Whether the initial performance of the sonatas took place in Prague or Dresden, Zelenka must have had specific performers in mind, as these works are among the most difficult works for double reeds in the Baroque era, and to insure their success, he had to have the finest players at his disposal. They require both great virtuosity and tremendous stamina.

Instrumentalists of the Dresden *Hofkapelle* were expected to perform on one instrument only. Having the luxury of specialization, they achieved the highest levels of skill and were the finest instrumentalists assembled in Europe.[33] It was in Dresden where this practice of specialization first originated in Germany. The idea of a musician who would limit himself to

[33] Landmann, 17-30. Instrumentalists were, however, expected to perform on the instruments within the instrumental family. Oboists were expected to play oboe d'amore and da caccia, for example.

one instrument may have been driven by the presence of Italians in the Dresden court orchestra, who most often focused on just one instrument. In contrast, J. S. Bach expected his oboe players to play recorder and violin. [34] Perhaps it was the specialization on one instrument that allowed for the virtuosic demands and idiomatic writing that occurred in the compositions at Dresden.

Between 1717 and 1733, the *Kleine Cammer-Musique* (refered to as the Polish or small chamber ensemble) consisted of an average of twelve musicians. It was created with the purpose of traveling with the King when he was away for extended periods, particularly when he was staying in Krakow or Warsaw, where the group was responsible for providing music for appropriate occasions. Among the well-known members of the Polish *Kapelle* was Quantz, who was initially an oboist. The fact that there were a number of players superior to him in ability and seniority meant that he could never advance very far, so he turned his talents to the traverso.[35] Christian Richter was the principal hautboist in both the *Grosse Capell-und Cammer-Musique* from the early 1720's and perhaps going back to 1716. He had been trained by François LaRiche, the senior oboist at Dresden who had been in residence since the turn of the century and was perhaps still active at the time of the six sonatas' composition. Richter traveled often and had spent a year in Venice

[34] Bruce Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe: A History of the Hautboy from 1640 to 1760,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 166.
[35] Nettl, 290.

in 1716, as well as having the opportunity to study with players in Paris.[36] Both Georg Philipp Telemann and Antonio Vivaldi wrote works for Richter. There were several other players of renown within the oboe section of the *Hofkapelle* that were reputed to be highly capable performers. Although it is likely that the sonatas were intended for performance in Dresden, it is equally possible that they were meant to be displayed in Prague. Zelenka could have drawn from Dresden musicians in either case, as according to Quantz, twenty court musicians accompanied Charles VI.

In regards to the bassoonists involved in these performances, there were two on the Dresden payroll at this time, namely Johann Gottfried Bohme and Jean Cadet. They were paid equally, and on the level of the leading violinists; only principal cellists and harpsichordists were paid more.[37] A court musician had the status of a middle to upper level servant. The hierarchy of court servants was carefully worked out.

It is not possible to say who performed these quadros; however, we assume that the sonatas accurately reflect the skills of the players that Zelenka had at his disposal. Bruce Haynes, oboe historian, speculated that virtually every piece was conceived with a specific player or players with specific abilities in mind, as most compositions would have just one performance. With these facts in mind, the bassoonist must have had tremendous technical prowess. The composer may have performed the violone part, but there were

[36]Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 327-8.
[37] Ibid., 288.

two Venetian contrabassists on the pay role as well. Sylvius Weiss was the most likely individual to have played the theorbo part as he was employed by the *Hofkapelle* and had the reputation of being the finest lutenist in Europe.

If surviving repertoire is an indication, 1700-1730 was the oboe's Golden Age; the greatest quantity of solo and chamber music comes from this period, as well as some of the most profound and varied compositions in the instrument's history.[38] Of all the pieces written that included the oboe during the early 18th century, only a small number were published. Most works were written for specific court ensembles and stayed in manuscript form, privately owned by the court. Perhaps it is due to the aforementioned practice that Zelenka's Sonatas remained undiscovered for over two centuries.

The Dresden Court

In order to picture the environment in which Jan Dismas Zelenka worked, it is necessary to consider the political and cultural setting of the Saxon court of Dresden. Music was just one facet of the culturally rich court of August the Strong. The Elector Friedrich August, gained the Saxon throne in 1694, and was responsible for creating the most extravagant period of cultural history in Dresden. According to George Buelow, a historian writing in 1994, Friedrich August "was a hedonist who reportedly had 394 children and who saw in cultural exhibitionism substantial political values, as had the French

[38] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe*, 275.

King, Louis XIV".[39] Friedrich August's musical training came from Kapellmeister Christoph Bernhard, who had been a student of Dresden *Kapellmeister* Heinrich Schutz.[40] The Elector's tastes were cultivated through extensive travel, which included a "grand tour" through the cultural centers of the continent. In France, he was greatly impressed by all the arts at the court of Versailles. The consequence of Friedrich August's new found passion was that he encouraged the French style in all the arts, employing the concertmaster Jean Baptiste Volumier, and troupes of French actors, dancers, and comédienes. In 1709, the court orchestra was expanded along the French lines, creating a six-part ensemble where there had been a four-part ensemble. In addition, the strings were supplemented with flutes, oboes, and bassoons, which were used to double the string parts.[41] The ruler's devotion to all things pleasurable resulted in the cultivation of his whims and fancies, and for a decade, court culture was focused on the arts of France.

In a short span of years, political and religious factors altered the cultural orientation of the Dresden court. Friedrich August saw an opportunity to seek the Polish crown, which necessitated his conversion to Catholicism. He was elected king of Poland, though his conversion did not affect the position of Lutheranism as the official state religion in Saxony. As a result of a military reversal, the crown was lost for two years (1706-1708). This

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[39] George Buelow, "Dresden in the Age of Absolutism", in *The Late Baroque Era from the 1680's to 1740* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey; Prentice Hall, 1994), 219.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Landmann, 19.

temporary loss made it necessary for the Friedrich August to demonstrate to the Papal curia and Catholic powers whose assistance he sought, that his conversion was sincere. In 1708, a modest Catholic church was rebuilt within the Royal Castle from an abolished theater. The choice of venue was "obviously intended not to disturb the feelings of the Protestant nobility and the burghers who did not wish to reconcile themselves to the Elector's conversion".[42]

The balance of leadership at the *Hofkapelle* shifted as the Electoral Prince appointed several new musicians to fill key positions. Johann David Heinichen (1683-1729) was based in Venice and was engaged as *Kapellmeister* in 1716. In the same year, the violin virtuoso and composer Francesco Maria Veracini (1690-1768) was recruited for the *Hofkapelle*. The Electoral Prince hired Antonio Lotti and contracted a group of Italian singers for opera performances who were to work in Dresden from 1717 to1720. Despite the short lived presence of the opera, the public developed a taste for the dramatic operatic style. The marriage treaty of the Hapsburg princess Maria Josepha to the Electoral Saxon Prince ensured that the public practice of the Catholic religion would go unhindered.[43] The combination of the opera's departure and the new focus on public worship turned musical attention to the Royal Chapel.

[42] Buzga, 181.
[43] Stockigt, 59.

From 1721 to 1729, Zelenka served as Heinichen's assistant as a contributor to the elaborate presentation of liturgical music at court. Heinichen was too ill to carry out his duties for much of the decade, and Zelenka took over many of his superior's responsibilities. In several letters that Zelenka wrote after Heinichen's death, it is clear that he expected to fill the vacant position, but to his dissappoinment, Johann Adolph Hasse arrived in Dresden in 1731, and was named honorary *Kapellmeister*. After the death of Friedrich August I in the beginning of 1733, court musicians began to appeal to the new elector for increased salaries, back pay, and changes in position.[44] Zelenka was no exception. He not only requested a raise in salary, but also a promotion to the position of *Kapellmeister*. Neither request was granted. The following years were notable for the renewal of the opera and the resultant loss of musical focus on the Catholic court. Hasse was successful as an opera composer, and politically adept. In his frequent abscenses from court, Zelenka was in charge of the liturgical needs of the musical establishment. It is within the context of the Catholic court chapel and the very public worship of the Saxon Electress and Polish Queen that Zelenka lived and worked until his death in 1745.

[44] Stockigt, 199.

CHAPTER TWO

National Styles

The rapid succession of rulers and their diverse alliances were motivating factors in the frequent stylistic changes at the Dresden court and chapel. In 1697, August converted to Catholicism in order to support his claims to the Polish throne, thereby promoting the Dresden court as a center of political influence. Like Louis XIV, he saw in cultural exhibitionism substantial political powers.[45] The endeavors of Friedrich August I (Saxon Elector and King of Poland) to command European political power occurred in 1719 with the marriage of his son, the Crown Prince Friedrich August to Maria Josepha. The Hapsburg alliance allowed Friedrich August I to maintain influence over Poland, while insuring rulership by heredity to his heirs. The strong ties to Poland and the Imperial Capital of Vienna added to the cultural climate of a city that was receptive to outside influences.

Table 2.1 Saxon Princes of the House of Wettin

Electors of the Holy Roman Empire*

Johann Georg II	1656-1680	
Johann Georg III	1680-1691	
Johann Georg IV	1691-1694	
Friedrich August I	1694-1733	Elector of Saxony and King of Poland
Friedrich August II	1733-1763	Elector of Saxony and King of Poland

*Ruled eastern Saxony, Northern Thuringia, Meissen, and Wittenberg

[45]Buelow, 219.

The geographical location of Dresden in central Germany and its proximity to Bohemia, Poland, Austria, and Italy was fundamental to its cultural development. As a cultural crossroads, the court in Eastern Saxony was host to visitors such as Vivaldi, Telemann, and Bach, as well as the composers and performers who were drawn to permanent positions at the court for financial and artistic reasons. The Dresden court orchestra was comprised of musicians from Germany, France, Italy, and the Austrian and Bohemian regions. Each performer/composer brought their individual experience and the performance practice of their native land to a musical culture that was ready to adopt foreign styles, forms, and techniques. Eclecticism became synonymous with German music of the 18th century.

"From the 1720's, Dresden became a major center for new Italian instrumental music (especially that of Vivaldi) and its assimilation by such composers as Bach and Pisendel."[46] Dresden had a lengthy musical relationship with Italy. More than one hundred years prior to the composition of Zelenka's sonatas, Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) began his tenure as *Oberkapellmeister* of the Dresden court. As early as 1629, he published his *Symphoniae Sacrae* utilizing contemporary elements of Italian style. Schütz studied with Giovanni Gabrieli (1585-1612) and for much of his career, strove to align the German polyphonic tradition with the Italian concertanto style.[47] The middle of Schütz's career was focused on the

[46]*The New Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed.*, s. v. "Germany, S1, 2 Art Music: 1648-1700,"by Ludwig Finscher.

[47] Buelow, 216.

composition of the sacred symphony and the concerto in the Italian concertante idiom. The role of instruments changed as they were assigned parts that were independent of the vocal parts, and the continuo came to be an indispensable part of the texture. Use of the Italian concertante technique in instrumental music was to have great ramifications for the next generation of Dresden composers.

The Italian influence flourished in Dresden under the rule of Johann Georg II, as Schütz shared the duties of the office of *Kapellmeister* with castrati Giovanni Andrea Bontempi, Vincenzo Albrici, and vice-*Kapellmeister* Marco Gioseppe Peranda. Singers and instrumentalists were recruited from Italy as early as 1616 (ten of the forty-seven members of the *Hofkapelle* were from Italy).[48] By the middle of the seventeenth century, Italian musicians were significantly influential in court ensembles. There was a short-lived decline in the number of Italians working in the *Kapelle* when Johann Georg III came to rule in 1680, as he found it necessary to reduce expenses, yet in 1685, what was thought to be a permanent Italian opera company was established.[49] Over the next forty-five years, the opera had a sporadic presence at the court, dependent on the economic health of the monarchy.

Friedrich August I (1694-1733) converted to the Catholic faith in 1697, after which the court *Kapelle* was intensely focused on the music from the Catholic countries. Johann Christoph Schmidt (1664-1728), court organist and later

[48] Gina Spagnoli, "Dresden at the Time of Heinrich Schütz," in *The Early Baroque Era* from the 1680's to 1740, Music and Society Series, ed. Curtis Price, (Englewood N.J: Prentice Hall, 1994), 164-170.
[49] Buelow, 217.

Kapellmeister, went to Italy to study during his tenure as organist and returned to Dresden determined to apply what he learned. Both Friedrich August I and his son encouraged the continuing education of their court composers, many of whom were sent to Italy to study with the masters of counterpoint. Zelenka, Johann Georg Pisendel, and Johann Joachim Quantz were all members of the royal entourage sent to Italy. Their purpose was to entertain the nobility, increase the collection of masterpieces for the court library by copying works of respected composers, and expand their knowledge of sacred and secular music.

For Zelenka, as for many of his German contemporaries, the importation into Germany of Italian concertos by Tomaso Albinoni, Giuseppe Torelli, Antonio Vivaldi, and others during the early years of the eighteenth century was an event of considerable significance. With the Italian focus on virtuoso string writing, tutti-solo opposition (in solo concertos), "orchestral" gestures designed to exploit a massed-string sound, and ritornello form, these compositions and techniques most influenced the German composers reaching maturity around 1710.[50] The flexibility of the Vivaldian ritornello form was particularly appealing and was incorporated into a variety of instrumental genres.

In 1719, upon the return of the royal party to Dresden from a Grand Tour to Vienna and Italy, the orchestra was expanded to include a total of thirty-

[50] Steven Zohn, The *Ensemble Sonatas of Georg Philipp Telemann: Studies in Style, Genre, and Chronology. Vol. 1*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1995), 428.

nine instrumentalists.[51] The orchestra was enlarged so that modern Italian music could be performed with adequate forces. This represented a significant increase in the size of the *Kapelle,* as it numbered twenty-two instrumentalists just eight years earlier. Antonio Lotti (c. 1667-1740), the most highly regarded opera composer of the time and organist and *maestro di cappella* of St. Mark's, as well as Johann David Heinichen (1683-1729) were appointed as *Kapellmeisters* alongside Schmidt following the Grand Tour. These additions to the ranks continued to influence both the style of performance and composition at the court for several decades.

Both Johann Georg IV and Friedrich August I shared a love of Italian opera. This enthusiastic devotion to the opera and a belief in cultural exhibitionism inspired a large scale building project, which included an opera house (*Hoftheater)* which was attached to the Zwinger palace.

Lotti was commissioned to write an opera for the occasion of the royal wedding of the crown prince in 1719.[52] In addition to composing opera, Lotti was involved in the production of vocal and ensemble music. His operas for Dresden and Vienna differ from those written for Venice in that they are "especially varied in instrumentation with the basic strings and continuo being enriched variously by recorders, trumpets, oboes and horns".[53] The

[51] Stockigt, 55.
[52] Ibid., 56.
[53] *The New Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* 2nd ed., s.v. "Lotti, Antonio," by Sven Hansell and Olga Termini.

following passage discusses techniques found frequently in various sacred and secular compositions at Dresden:

> Two stylistic influences operate behind the façade of Neapolitan musical characteristics-the Viennese and the Venetian. The Viennese manner of compositions (exemplified by such composers as Caldara and Conti) is characterized through contrapuntal processes, orientation towards rhythmic-melodic aspects of dance genres, fugue, and concerto, through the frequent employment of concerted accompaniments, and interesting small-scale details in phrase construction. Venetian compositional techniques employed by northern Italians, composers such as Lotti…and Vivaldi, are observed with "their often almost machine-like symmetry of passage work and phrase structure, with their corresponding melodic construction, their rousing unisons, and their instrumentally-influenced triadic melodies.[54]

Manuscripts of music by Vivaldi, Caldara, Lotti and Conti are held by the Dresden State Library, and were available for Zelenka and his colleagues for study.

At the turn of the century, the Imperial *Kapellmeister* Johann Joseph Fux "had demonstrated an interest in the amalgamation of the distinctive national styles of France and Italy".[55] With the restructuring of the *Kapelle* shortly after the turn of the century, a chamber ensemble was founded on French ideals, which was comprised of a flute, oboes, bassoons and six strings. Jean Baptiste Volumier was installed as concertmaster. Membership of the *Kapelle* in 1709 included many French performers, both vocal and instrumental. Records confirm that there were four violinists, three cellists, two flutists and two

[54] Stockigt, 206-207.
[55] Ibid., 44.

oboists from France in the membership. This ensemble would perform both on its own and combined with the other members of the orchestra.

During the first decade of the eighteenth century, the French instrumental style was still primarily associated in Germany with the orchestral suite, either arranged from the theater music of Jean-Baptiste Lully, André Campra, and other French composers, or newly composed by German proponents of the French style. In the following decade, German composers such as Telemann began composing trio sonatas in the French style. The points of style consistent with the contemporary French trio suites include a constricted range and an avoidance of the idiomatic style for violin that was common to Italian sonatas (techniques which include double stops and the use of wide range); the avoidance of which allowed performance on variety of treble instruments.[56] In Dresden, the combination of a pair of oboes with bassoon, known as a "Lullian trio", was commonly used and is thought of as a French instrumental color. Many movements allude to the French dances and bear tempo markings in French. Other features associated with the French style include tuneful simplicity, frequent use of dotted rhythms, limited rhythmic variety, and a predominance of homophonic texture. The French style traits are evident in selected works of several works of the Dresden instrumental composers, specifically, in a few of Zelenka's orchestral works, the *Concerti di*

[56] Zohn, 135.

camera of Francesco Venturini (c. 1675-1745),[57] and early trios of Telemann's which were in the Dresden library's collection.

By 1720, a pure French style was less common than an amalgamation of styles, which included the Italian, French, German and Polish traditions. The *Hofkapelle*, as referred to by both Telemann and Quantz was well known for its combination of Italian delicacy with its French liveliness. Upon Quantz's arrival in Dresden in 1716, he was inspired to write about this unusual ensemble as follows:

> Here I soon became aware that the mere playing of the notes as set down by the composer was far from being the greatest merit of a musician. The Royal Orchestra was in full bloom already at this time. It distinguishes itself from many other orchestras by its French smoothness of performance, as introduced by the concertmaster at the time, Volumier; just as later, under the direction of its concertmaster Herr Pisendel, who introduced a mixed style (a mixture of French and Italian performance elements) achieved a finesse of performance which I have never heard bettered in all my travels.[58]

Composers of this period were knowledgeable in regards to the Italian, French and Polish styles of composition as well as the church, chamber and opera styles. The German was regarded as an amalgamation of styles, which joined the best aspects of each.[59] Pisendel established himself as the chief advocate of this style, and was joined in the 1730's by Johann Adolf Hasse, who incorporated the German style into his compositions.[60] The "mixed taste" became widely cultivated among composers, advocated by critics, and

[57] Stockigt, 52.
[58] Nettl, 287.
[59] Ibid., 341.
[60] Landmann, 23.

discussed in the contemporary writings of Johann Christoph Gottshed, Johann Adolph Scheibe, and Johann Mattheson.[61]

Eighteenth century theorists viewed the Polish idiom to be an essential element of this mixed style.[62] The Polish elements in evidence in the music of Dresden composers include characteristics of folk and courtly dances that use animated syncopations. Other performance elements that were adopted into the instrumental music of Dresden included the use of distinctive dotted rhythms, duple meters with the accent in the middle of the bars, and many other rhythmic devices that gave this music a unique quality.

The Polish style was in vogue in the first quarter of the 18th century. The term *polonaise* was used by Bach and Telemann and was applied to their own compositions. Althought the *polonaise* was identified with popular vocal works in Dresden, it often refers to a showy, ornate, or brilliant drawing room piece.[63] Stylistically, the term *polonaise* refers to music that consists of short phrases with no upbeats, often organized in two measure phrases that are melodically and rhythmically similar and may function sequentially. Typically, there is a narrow range in the upper voice and an emphasis on tonic and dominant pitches. The *polonaise* and *mazurka* were the most common dances used in German music. Within duple meter composition, the

[61] Zohn, 168-171.

[62] Johann Joachim Quantz, On playing the flute, trans. Edward G. Reilly (London: Faber, 1966), 335.

[63] Charles Burney *An Eighteenth-Century Musical Tour in Central Europe and the Netherlands* (London 1959), 118. He is referring to a vocal tradition in the Polonaise style exemplified by J. A. Hasse.

accent falls in the middle of the bar. There is persistent repetition of short rhythmic cells and abrupt tonal shifts and common use of unison passages.[64]

The *polonaise* was popular in the courts of many countries by the end of the 17th century. Zelenka had a long association with the *Capella Polacca* at Dresden, and the royalty he was serving were the new rulers of Poland.

Ortrun Landmann claimed that at the time of J. S. Bach, in the Dresden *Hofkappelle* "the Germans predominate, especially if they are taken to include Bohemians, Poles and Austrians" who she claims were "not particularly noted for any distinctive musical style at that time".[65] Despite Landmann's statement, the contribution made by the "non-Germans" to the mixed style is undeniable. The Germans were skillful in adopting the Italian and French styles and melding them with their thorough knowledge of harmony. In the opinion of Quantz, howver, despite considerable proficiency in "correct" composition and the ability to play many types of instruments, the Germans displayed few indications of good style or beautiful melodies. "Both their style and their melodies were rather flat, dry, meager, and paltry for a longer time than those of their neighbors".[66]

Parallel to the imported opera tradition, was a tradition of instrumental music. What distinguished German musical culture was not only the existence of an impressive performance tradition, (which could also be found

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[64] Johann Mattheson, *Der volkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg: Christian Herold, 1739; repr. Kassel: Barenreiter, 1954), 162,165, and 228.

[65] Landmann, 20.

[66] Quantz, 335.

in Italy), but also of a theoretical interest in it.[67] There was a particular focus on instrumental music, considered as completely autonomous, and a self-sufficient expressive mode, capable of conveying emotions without being reliant on text. The tradition of instrumental performance flourished at Dresden in the early eighteenth century, thanks to the skills of the individual performers and the German tradition of cultivating its composition.

The music held in the State Library provides evidence of the music that was used for the court church. As the church was consecrated in 1708, a new repertoire of sacred music had to be built from scratch, so music composed outside the court was relied upon. The financial responsibility for these acquisitions fell on the *Kapellmeister* or composer responsible for the performance.[68] The court was willing to pay the copying costs for music, but beyond that, the chamber musicians were wholly responsible for the development of their repertoire. Written petitions, including that of Zelenka, document the attempts of the musicians to recoup their expenses. The elector's conversion was politically, rather than spiritually motivated, and although the liturgical needs of the new church had to be met, the treasury was not forthcoming with remuneration for the expenditures of the church composers. Dresden's composers are well represented in the archives, as are composers from central and northern Germany, as well as the Bohemian and Austrian regions. Johann Georg Pisendel's estate was preserved and includes

[67] Enrico Fubini, *Music and Culture in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, trans. ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn, (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1994), 31.
[68] Landmann, 25.

an extensive collection of chamber music due, in part, to the fact that he was responsible for the concerts held at court.

Pisendel's close association with Antonio Vivaldi, in particular, proves especially important to Dresden.

> Overlaying the current, traditional, national and regional styles surrounding the Electoral Saxon and Royal Polish court were the highly regarded cultures from France and Italy. All was crowned with the visual and musical emblems of the royal status of the Dresden court. The resultant exoticism-a feature underpinning the entire culture of this era of Saxony's history-came to be reflected musically in the selection, use, and combinations of instrumental colors, in melodic inflections, harmonic and dynamic details, and especially in rhythmic elements of music composed for Dresden.[69]

It is difficult to pinpoint the year when Dresden came to have a style unique to its instrumental music, but it is clear that music imported to the court was often altered to suit the needs of the instrumentation of the ensembles. Versions changed by Pisendel and Zelenka often augmented the accompanying group by adding oboes and bassoons. Pisendel often made these changes in instrumental music, Zelenka, in sacred music.

> A few composers appeared to have produced a steady and substantial stream of works for Dresden, in spite of specific requirements each work was expected to fulfill. The generally opulent scoring in so-called orchestral works by such composers as Telemann, Johann Friedrich Fasch, or Johann Gottlieb Graun is striking, as is the fundamentally virtuoso style of writing. Neither Fasch nor even Telemann could have performed works of the kind in their own respective circumstances, so they were clearly fulfilling the requirements of the Dresden Kapelle by highlighting the strength and diversity of its forces.[70]

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[69]Stockigt, 57.
[70]Ibid., 26.

Vivaldi wrote concertos for Dresden that share these characteristics. The composers at Dresden provided the model for such compositions as exemplified in the works of Heinichen, who wrote many concertos for multiple soloists. In these works, the accompanying instrumental forces vary by movement. Vivaldi's influence on Zelenka will be explored further in Chapter 3.

The Role of the Oboe in the early 18th Century

The oboe was, and to some extent still is, associated with France. By around 1700, the oboe (hautboy, hautbois) was adopted throughout Europe, largely replacing the shawm. The term hautbois is French, and most adept performers of the early 18th century were French or had been trained in France or by French performers. As courts throughout Europe employed these skilled performers, the traditional techniques developed in France tended to make French performing styles dominant among woodwind players everywhere. This style became the international standard.[71]

The hautbois was first used in the military, and often as part of a court sponsored regiment. Soon after its appearance, hautboists were enlisted for civilian use and were employed by city governments. Aristocrats who maintained a court employed the *Hofmusic* (chamber) hautboist. If a court

[71]Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe*, 9.

and city were closely connected, it was possible for the oboist to work for both the city and the court.

Mounted infantry maintained a double reed and tympani band. The dragoons (mounted infantry) first employed the shawm, which was gradually replaced by the oboe. Although both shawms and oboes were used in battle, the shawm, with its penetrating sound, was the better instrument for signaling because of its loud, penetrating tone, while the oboe lent itself to entertaining.[72] For most oboists working for the court as a bandsman, working conditions were calm as their principal obligations involved military ceremonies, parades, funerals, and concerts.

Several levels of employment fell under the general title of *Stadtpfeifer*. The *Turmer*, or tower musicians, were needed for sounding alarms for fires, sounding watches and alarms, as well as performing for weddings and other entertainments. The second and more accomplished group of musicians were expected to provide music at the city's churches and festivities. They were allowed to supplement their incomes through freelance work, significantly improving their base salary. These oboists, appointed for life, often passed down these positions within the family. Many musicians were trained and gained experience in a five to six year training program. Most oboe players in Germany were trained by the *Stadtpfeifer*. The city musicians were often provided with clothes, instruments, and provisions. In addition, they were

[72] Werner Braun, "The *Hautboist*, Evolving Careers and Functions" in The Social Status of Professional Musician from the Middle Ages to the 19th Century, Sociology of Music No.1, ed. Walter Salmen, trans. Herbert Kausner and Barbara Reisner (New York: Pendragon Press, 1983), 137.

occasionally exempt from paying taxes.[73] They enjoyed a high social status within the city. Working for a city may have provided a better lifestyle than working for a single ruler.

> The best-paid hautboists did very well in the eighteenth century, certainly better than any player today did, and often better than their colleagues on other instruments. In a time when music had some of the public functions that sport does today, the best-paid players were probably regarded in a way not unlike the star athletes of today, hired by city teams.[74]

The *Hofmusicus* was a servant of the court that engaged in chamber and orchestral music, as well as opera. These musicians performed music for the chapel, the chamber, official ceremonies such as weddings, the theatre and many forms of entertainment, for example, after a hunt or during a meal (*Tafelmusik).* Although these posts were sought after, the financial well being of a court musician was unreliable. In a petition to the Elector in 1733, Zelenka states that for eighteen months, while part of a retinue of the Prince in Vienna, he went without pay, while the other musicians were provided for.[75] Zelenka's plea is one of many in which he asks for an increase in pay, or adequate remuneration for his work. For the members of the court's musical establishment, there was no job security and salary was often in arrears. In addition, instruments were often property of the court, and as such, could not be taken home. This made it necessary for the player to purchase his own instrument in order to be able to practice and make reeds.

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[73] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 283.
[74] Ibid., 288.
[75] Stockigt, 47.

A *Hofmusicus* in the eighteenth century, even a court composer, was a middle to upper level servant at court, and had a deferential comportment not unlike that of a twentieth-century butler. The hierarchy of court servants was carefully worked out. At the Wurttemberg court in 1710, for instance, the *Kapellmeister* was in the sixty-ninth place, 'Cammer-Musici-Virtuosi' in ninety-fourth, 'Musici ordinarii' at 104th, and bandsmen (*Hautboisten)* lower still, probably at about the same social rank as the stable boys".[76] The principal oboe, bassoon and accomplished violinists made similar salaries The second and third ranked musicians, however, did not always fare as well.[77]

Although the pay scale was based upon ability, not nationality, Italian or French musicians usually filled the position of *Kapellmeister* and concertmaster. Raises were infrequent, and promotions rare. In comparison to trade workers, however, musicians at the Dresden court were well paid.

> The composer and conductor Antonio Lotti and his wife, the singer Santa Stella, received 10,500 Thaler, and Senesino got 7,000. A construction worker in Dresden received less than 100 per year. Schmidt, the *Kapellmeister*, was at 1,200, as was Woulmyer (Volumier), the leader; good instrumentalists like Pisendel (one of the best-known violinists of his day) were paid 400, and the violists survived on 100; on special occasions, there were other gifts both of cash and articles of value.[78]

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[76] Hildebrand, Renate. *"Das Oboenensemble in Deutschland von der Anfangen bis ca. 1720"* (Diplomarbeit, Schola Cantorum Basiliensis) p.54 from a quote in Bruce Haynes, *The Eloquent Hautboy*, 277.

[77] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 287.

[78] Ibid., 288.

These rates reflect the pay schedule of c. 1718, when Zelenka and Pisendel were each earning roughly 400 Thalers per year for their performance duties and the average skilled laborer was making less than 100 Thalers per year.[79] Immediate difficulties arise when trying to convert the value of a Dresden Thaler into a modern currency equivalent as a consequence of varying silver content, and a lack of standardization of weights and measures. Coinage was ordered by the city or individual ruler, and varied in value.

It is difficult to assess what percentage of the total income was represented by the wages indicated by the Dresden records, as it is possible that extra allowances in cash or goods was provided. Few players left the employ of the court, so we must assume that despite requests for pay increases, the standard of living must have been superior to that at surrounding courts.

The *Hofmusicus'* primary responsibility was to the orchestra, which in 1709 had been established along French lines. The Lullian orchestra model was employed in the early 18th century in most of Northern Germany. The orchestras were composed of a string core that was supplemented by a pair of oboes and a bassoon. The double reeds doubled the string, thereby strengthening their sound and adding color. These winds occasionally performed exposed trio passages. The oboes and bassoons were utilized as "tutti" instruments, part of the ripieno that added brilliance. Violin and oboe

[79] Richard Petzold, "The Economic Conditions of the 18th Century Musician," *The Social Status of the Professional Musician from the Middle Ages to the 19th Century*, ed. Walter Salmen, trans. Herbert Kaufman and Barbara Reisner, Sociology of Music No. 1 (New York: Pendragon Press, 1983), 170.

parts were one and the same at the outset of the century. The oboe timbre was a fundamental element in the sound of the Lullian orchestra.

The oboe came into use at the Dresden court quite late in relation to neighboring cities in Germany. The first reference to its use is in 1695, when the oboe was added during the restructuring of the court *Kapelle* with the introduction of French instruments. While visiting Vienna in 1699, Friedrich August engaged the Henrion brothers to perform on the hautbois. They were part of the "*Bande Hautboisten oder Kammmerpfeiffer*" which included four hautbois, five flutists, and three bassoonists.[80] The same year, François La Riche (1662-1739), one of the best-known players and authorities on the hautbois, was hired, though rarely played in the orchestra.[81]

La Riche was also an agent for the Elector and was well compensated for his duties.[82] It was not unusual for an oboist to have additional court duties in non-musical positions. They found work as secretaries, administrators, and agents.

La Riche was very successful as a teacher of the oboe, and his students were employed with the finest court orchestras. Christian Richter and Michael Böhm were both pupils of La Riche. Richter was the principal hautboist in the *Grosse Capell-und Cammer-Musique* from c. 1716, and had toured with the Crown Prince on his Grand Tour of the 1710's.[83] Böhm was

[80] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe*, 142.
[81] Ibid., 326.
[82] Stockigt, 55.
[83] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 327.

employed with Telemann's Leipzig Collegium and in the *Kapelle* at Darmstadt. Telemann wrote many pieces for Böhm and a quartet for Böhm, Richter, La Riche, and Peter Glösch of Frankfurt. The presence of La Riche and his pupils may have been the inspiration for the wealth of music involving the oboe that were written at the Dresden court in the early eighteenth century.

The primary court orchestra was involved in the Catholic court church music, the Italian opera, and instrumental concerts at court. Until 1717, the orchestra also accompanied Friedrich August during his regular trips to Poland (Krakow and Warsaw). In that year a second orchestra, the *Kleine Kammer-musique* also known as the *Capella-Polacca*, was created specifically to accompany Friedrich August in his travels, and was led by the composer and oboist Giovanni Ristori.[84] This distinct chamber ensemble fulfilled the needs of the court while the nobility was traveling. In holding the dual role of Elector of Saxony, and King of Poland, August found the need to maintain two courts, and therefore two orchestras.

During the first half of the 18th century, the *Hofkapelle* employed from four to six oboists at all times. Besides the two orchestras, the court sponsored ensembles of *Bock* or *Hof-Pfeifer* and *Jagd-Pfeifer* played for the theatre troops, *Tafelmusik*, and balls. There were also military oboe bands in the service of the court. Members of these groups, as well as the city's *Stadtpfeifer*, were

[84] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe, 326.*

available to serve the *Kapelle* and served as a pool of candidates that could advance. In Germany, such a system for the professional advancement for the oboist was not unusual.

Music was supported by the power of patronage, and thus, composition and performance opportunities could be encouraged or hindered by the financial support of the ruler. It was not necessarily meant to serve the common good, but rather to support religious ideals or a mythology about the royalty. In the case of Dresden, the religious ideals went through a significant change with the conversion of the Elector, and musical establishments changed with them. The liturgical needs of the new church were a catalyst for change, and the importation of musical culture from the Catholic countries brought innovative ideas to the music of the church, opera, and court.

Along with the developments in style came an increase in the forces necessary to perform the imported music, and the musicians that swelled the ranks brought in traditions from their native lands. Many musicians from Italy and France joined the *Hofkapelle*, as well as fine instrumentalists from the Bohemian lands, Belgium, and Austria.

The musicians filled the ranks of the various ensembles supported by the court, and were responsible for an extraordinary and varied schedule of sacred and secular performances. The individual status and income of the musicians varied according to their ability, reputation, and position within

the establishment. They were often provided with the opportunity for further study as they often attended members of the nobility on their sojourns. The Dresden court orchestra gained knowledge, repertoire, and reputation through these travels, and returned to the home court inspired by the works of such luminaries as Gabrieli, Palestrina, Fux, and Vivaldi.

CHAPTER THREE

PART ONE: *Sonate auf Concertenart*

Zelenka's Sonata V is part of a body of literature written for one to three obbligato instruments and continuo, in which the imitative texture of the sonata is combined with the formal structures of the Vivaldian concerto. In Zelenka's sonatas, the size of the concertino varies as the role of the player alternates between tutti and solo material. The distinctions between a sonata and concerto are blurred as the tutti and solo instruments share thematic material. The obbligato instruments switch roles during the course of a movement and participate in sonata like imitation. Of the six ensemble sonatas in Zelenka's ZWV 181, Sonata V is the only one based on the Italian concerto. The remainder of the sonatas adhere to the overall plan of the *sonata da chiesa*.

The Dresden Electoral court was a major center of composition and performance of sonatas *auf Concertenart,* or sonatas in the manner of a concerto. These works are mainly in trio and quartet scoring and were composed between 1710 and 1740. According to the historian Jeanne Swack, the genre evolved after Vivaldi's chamber concertos were widely disseminated in parts of Germany.[85] Swack states that although Vivaldi's works were taken as models by a group of German composers from Saxony

[85] Jeanne R. Swack, "On the Origins of the *Sonate auf Concertenart," Journal of the American Musicological Society* 46/3 (1993), 375-414.

and Thuringia, which included J. S. Bach, Telemann, Quantz, Zelenka, and Heinichen, Dresden was at the heart of Vivaldi's reception in Germany. It is not known exactly when the Dresden musicians first became acquainted with Vivaldi's chamber concertos, but it is well documented that Georg Pisendel (1687-1755), the concertmaster of the Kapelle, returned from his studies in Venice with Vivaldi and Torelli with copies of his teachers' compositions in 1717.[86]

The earliest sonatas in the manner of a concerto known to exist are Vivaldi's Sonata in C Major, RV 779, circa 1707, and his Concerto for five instruments in g minor, RV 107, circa 1710. Vivaldi's later concerted ensemble compositions include a trio for flute, violin, and continuo, RV 84, and RV 96.[87] Telemann also experimented with the *Sonata auf Concertenart* principles around the year 1710 when he combined elements of the modern concerto with more traditional sonata procedures in his Op.3, no.8.[88]

The creation of the term sonata *auf Concertenart* is attributed to the German theorist Johann Adolph Scheibe.[89] Scheibe published his definition in an article meant to distinguish between the ordinary *ouverture* and a concerted *ouverture*. In the beginning of the general discussion of sonatas, Scheibe classifies trios and quartets according to their status as ordinary or *auf*

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[86] Michael Talbot, *Vivaldi*, 160. Jeanne Swack suggests that perhaps Pisendel brought a copy of RV 107 to Dresden upon his return from Venice in *Sonate auf Concertenart*, 375.

[87] Zohn, 449, and Swack, *Sonate auf Concertenart,* 374.

[88] Swack, 381.

[89] Michael Marissen, BWV 1032, Sonata in A major, *Early Music* 13 (1985), 387-88, and Laurence Dreyfus, BWV 1029, g minor Sonata for viola da gamba, Journal of the American Musicological Society (5) 1987: 57-64.

Concertenart.[90] By the time that Scheibe includes the discussion of the genre in his Hamburg journal, the composition of such works had all but ceased. Scheibe, in his *Critischer Musikus* of 1740 outlined the generic characteristics specific to the *sonate auf Concertenart*.

1. The sonata *auf Concertenart* permits melodies that are more convoluted and varied. Melodies need not be so "natural".
2. While ordinary sonatas are in four movements (slow-fast-slow-fast), in sonatas *auf Concertenart*, the composer may omit the first slow movement.
3. While the first fast movement in an ordinary sonata is fugal or imitative, with at least the upper voices equal, in a sonata *auf Concertenart* the equality of the upper voices is not necessary; one part may be more active than the other, and have convoluted, running and varied (virtuosic) passages.
4. The bass part in the first fast movement need not be as succinct as in ordinary sonatas.
5. The first fast movement requires a skillful and learned counterpoint.[91]

Scheibe makes no mention of slow *Concertenart* movements, and in further discussions of the genre, makes general comments about the final movement

[90] Zohn, 433-434.
[91] Swack, 371-2.

as a more succinct and pleasant movement. Scheibe does little more than to define the parameters of the concerted sonata. In a revised version of his original article, published in 1745, Scheibe clearly notes that the principal idea "should be treated in invertible counterpoint, as would the thematic material in an ordinary sonata, implying a trio-like exchange of material that is not usually found in concertos."[92]

"The line between the *Sonate auf Concertenart* and the chamber concerto is fine indeed, so fine that at times copyists disagreed whether to label a work as a sonata or concerto".[93] There seemed to have been no agreement among 18th century musicians as to what to call such pieces. The sonatas in the manner of a concerto were given generic titles that indicated little in terms of how the piece fit the form of a conventional sonata or concerto. Similar terminilogical inconsistencies are common in other 18th century chamber music repertories. In sources for early Classical Viennese music, the terms "cassation" and "notturno" are used synonymously, and the term "divertimento" applied to a wide variety of genres.[94]

It is necessary to make clear that we are not discussing the trio sonata as such, but rather, works that obscure the generic distinction between sonata and concerto. Some 18th century copyists and composers entitled the sonatas *auf concertenart* "concerto", which may have been motivated by a particular

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[92] Zohn, 436.

[93] Swack, 382.

[94] James Webster, "Towards a History of Viennese Chamber Music in the Early Classical Period," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 27/2 (1974); 215-31.

scoring, a general emphasis on the Italian style, or by the weight of the solo part. Several of Zelenka's ensemble sonatas bore no title at all. The fifth Sonata parts were copied by a court scribe (perhaps Tobias Butz), and were entitled "Sonata"; later, for an unknown reason, Zelenka inserted the letter u in all the parts to change the title to Suonata.[95]

A brief history of the Ensemble Sonata prior to the composition of the *Sonate auf Concertenart*

Zelenka's works, though composed within the context of local tradition, were highly inventive. As an active performer in the chamber music ensemble at the Dresden court, Zelenka was familiar with the compositions of the composers with whom he lived and worked, as well as those of visiting distinguished composers. He was also well acquainted with the chamber music of the masters of an earlier generation of composers whose music he had collected and studied.

The Italian trio sonatas were imitated or adapted by composers in many countries, and Germany was no exception. Ensemble sonatas were written by George Muffat, Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Joseph Fux, Antonio Caldara, and many other composers familiar to the instrumentalists at the Dresden court. These works were mostly in the Corellian four-movement form and shared features of Corelli's trio sonata such as the inclusion of dance

[95] Wolfgang Horn, Critical Commentary to Jan Dismas Zelenka, Sonata in F major for two Oboes, Bassoon and Basso continuo, ZWV 181, 5 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1992) Hortus Musicus 275, trans. by J. Bradford Robinson.

movements. Corelli's solo writing for violin was notable for its highly embellished slow movements in which he utilized a limited range of the violin.

Many ensemble sonatas contained intricate fugues, which combined the German partiality for counterpoint with a style derived from the Italian instrumental composers. The Baroque technique of sonata writing began with the introduction of a theme or melodic-rhythmic subject that transmitted an *affection* and then spun it out (*Fortspinnung)* using relatively infrequent cadences. The melodic substance itself could be comprised of simple chordal figurations, which might be decorated with appoggiaturas, passing tones and scalar figures. There was frequent use of sequential repetition of phrases or segments of phrases, a technique that articulated sections. The musical material within movements was highly integrated, and often lacked in contrast.

Vivaldi's influence on instrumental music in the eighteenth century was equal to that of Corelli's a generation earlier; the concise themes and clarity of form in the concerto crafted by Vivaldi were transmitted to many composers.[96] A method for creating more variety can be found in Vivaldi's concertos and concerted ensemble music, which established a formal pattern of contrasts between thematic ritornello and solo sections. These techniques

[96] Donald Jay Grout, *A History of Western Music,* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co.) 3rd edition, 409.

were fundamental to the basic construction of the ensemble sonata of the early eighteenth century.

The Ensemble Sonata at Dresden

That Dresden was a stylistic melting pot has been well established, but its receptiveness was somewhat dependent on the genre in question. Although the French style influenced the instrumental suites, the Italian style had far more influence on the church and chamber sonatas. "Concertante playing by different solo instruments was of elemental importance for the cohesion of Dresden's virtuosic ensemble, while the concerto suite was the most obvious form into which to channel conflicting desires of several virtuosos all anxious to shine".[97] Virtuosity was one of the defining elements in the music written for the royal orchestra. 'The fundamentally virtuoso style of writing exposed the strength and diversity of the *Hofkapelle's* forces".[98]

The *Hofkapelle* performed concerted trios and quartets by composers with connections to the court, including Vivaldi, Johann Gottlieb Graun (1703-71), and Telemann, as well as by resident composers such as Johann David Heinichen and Johann Joachim Quantz. Tomaso Albinoni dedicated a concerted sonata to the Dresden violinist Johann Georg Pisendel that belonged to the court's repertory, as did the Handel trio for two violins and continuo, the composer's only sonata *auf Concertenart*.[99]

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[97] Reinhard Goebel, *Concerti per l'orchestra di Dresda"*, Deutche Grammaphone 447 644-2, Musica Antiqua Köln

[98] Landmann, 26.

[99] Zohn, 450n.

Zelenka composed orchestral suites, commonly referred to as Capriccios (ZWV 182-5 and 190), which illustrate virtuosic writing for several of the winds. This set of suites was composed in 1718, two years before the estimated date of composition of ZWV 181. The Capriccios are similar to various instrumental works copied for use in Dresden during the first two decades of Zelenka's employment there,[100] and are similar to the *Concerti di camera* of Francesco Venturini (c. 1675-1745), who gives a prominent role to the trio of two oboes and bassoon and provide an opportunity for virtuosic display.

Ensemble Sonatas for Double Reeds

A significant number of works were composed for the combination of two oboes, obbligato bassoon, and continuo in the early eighteenth century. Most were written in Germany, and many of those are held in the Dresden State Library. Some of the concerted sonatas for double reed ensemble were composed by Johann Friedrich Fasch, who was *Kapellmeister* at Zerbst with close ties to his colleagues at the neighboring Saxon court.[101] Four of his quartets for two oboes, obbligato bassoon, and continuo are held in the Dresden State Library, as Fasch regularly sent music to Heinichen, Pisendel and Zelenka for performance at Dresden.[102] Antonio Lotti, famed Italian opera composer in residence from 1717 to 1720, left two quartets for the same combination of instruments. Johann David Heinichen, Dresden *Kapellmeister*,

[100] Stockigt, 52.
[101] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 327.
[102] Ibid., 323.

wrote one quartet, which closely follows the Vivaldian model for a concerted sonata in that it is in three movements, two of which utilize ritornellos. The most prolific composer of this repertoire was Jan Dismas Zelenka, who wrote six sonatas, five of which are for this ensemble. Bruce Haynes states that "an ensemble consisting of these instruments (two oboes, bassoon and basso continuo) must have been more or less permanent" at the Dresden court, as there are multiple pieces written for the combination, composed at various times.[103] We can only speculate that these ensembles were used for entertainment purposes such as *Tafelmusik*. There is also evidence that small chamber ensembles were frequently used to substitute for sung portions of liturgy, and the double reed ensemble repertoire could have served this purpose.

In regards to obbligato bass quartets, of which Zelenka's Sonata IV, V, and VI belong, there are approximately sixty examples. They involved a great variety of instrumental combinations, and were composed in Germany between c. 1715 and c. 1740. The majority of these quadros were in circulation at the Dresden court

The exploitation of a wide variety of sonorities was key to the style of composition in Dresden. An ensemble of a few, elite artists accustomed to playing together made it possible to cultivate ever higher degrees of sophistication in taste, thereby promoting the prestige of the court.

[103] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe*, 327.

Vivaldi's influence on the Ensemble Sonata

The sonata, by its inherent flexibility, lends itself to the merging of other genres. This is particularly true with the Vivaldian concerto. The Vivaldi concerto was constructed of a partitionable, tonally closed ritornello, alternating with modulatory solo sections that featured virtuosic passagework. The texture was usually lightened during solo passages. The partitioning of the ritornello and the treatment of the resulting segments was central to the genre. In the *sonate auf concertenart* genre, the alternation of ritornellos, with tonally unstable solo episodes create the skeleton of the piece.

An important predecessor to Zelenka's sonatas is Vivaldi's Concerto á 5 in g minor, RV 107, a copy of which was most likely brought to Dresden upon Pisendel's return to Dresden in 1717. It is in the Dresden collection and was thought to have been influential, as "works produced by musicians resident at the court show a stylistic and structural affinity with this piece".[104]

Vivaldi's Concerto á 5 is scored for flute, oboe, violin, and bassoon. The bassoon plays a role similar to its function in the later Zelenka sonatas in that the bassoon fulfills its traditional role of providing a line of basso continuo, but also assumes a concertante function.[105] Vivaldi was one of the few composers, other than Zelenka, to have featured the bassoon as a solo instrument in a concerted sonata.

[104] Swack, 375.

[105] Vivaldi's work is scored for flute, oboe, violin, bassoon and continuo, thereby utilizing an additional concertante voice.

In Vivaldi's RV 107, the instruments alternate roles; sometimes the solo instrument fulfills a ripieno function when not being utilized as a solo instrument. The ritornellos normally begin and end in the same key. The episodes begin in one key and end in another while exploring the virtuosic possibilities of the soloist's instrument. Free episodic material is occasionally interrupted by the return by the partial or complete return of the structurally important ritornello.

In Vivaldi's ritornello, there are generally three segments, which have differing functions. The first is the *Vordersatz* or first part, which establishes the tonality with tonic and dominant harmonies, and coming to a close on the tonic, or (more frequently) dominant chord. The second part (*Fortspinnung)* of the ritornello consists of sequential material, which outlines the root movement in fifths. The third part (*Epilog*) may involve more sequential material, and brings the ritornello to a close with cadential material in the tonic. These terms were used by Wilhelm Fischer in an article discussing Viennese Classical style and were adopted by scholars in describing the harmonic syntax and thematic organization of the Vivaldian ritornello.[106]

The first movement of RV 107 provides an antecedent for later works in which aspects of the concerto and sonata are combinined. The instruments take turns in the roles of "tutti" and "solo" or "soli", simulating both orchestra and soloists. It is similar to the works of German composers of the

[106] Wilhelm Fischer, "Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wiener klassischen Stils,"*Studen zur Musikwissenschaft* 3 (1915): 24-84.

sonate auf Concertenart genre and is a standard against which one can compare Zelenka's venture into the little known genre.

TABLE 3.1 FORMAL PLAN RV 107, movement 1*

Section	Key	Measures	Thematic Material
R1	i	1-4	V..F..E
S1	i to III	4-10	S
R2	III	10-13	V..F..e
S2	III to v	13-21	V..S
R3	v	21-23	V..f..e
S3	v-iv	23-29	S
R4	iv	29-31	V..f..e
S4	III	31-35	S
R5	III	35-38	V..f..e
S5	III-v-i	38-41	S
R6	i	41-45	V..F..e
S6	i	45-53	solo and coda with V

*E=*epilog*, F=*Fortspinnung*, V=*Vordersatz*, s=solo e=variation on the *epilog*, f=variation on the *fortspinnung*

PART TWO: ZWV 181, no. 5 in F major

Zelenka's F major sonata is a work of three movements in fast-slow-fast order. The first movement has a ritornello structure; the second, a lyrical adagio; and the third is fugal. The instrumentation is for two oboes, continuo, and a bassoon whose role is sometimes soloist, sometimes a member of the continuo. Exceptional at first glance is the extreme length of the outer movements. If we look at the length of contemporary sonatas by a wide spectrum of composers, only the other sonatas in ZWV 181 are comparable to the F major sonata in duration.

In the Sonata V, the episodes are unusual in their extreme virtuosity, challenging the technique of each player. One feature of the *sonata auf Concertenart* that is associated with the concerto is that the solo episodes are written in a virtuosic manner. The solo episodes of Zelenka's sonata push the parameters of possibility in terms of the range, endurance, and technique of the oboes and bassoon. On modern instruments, the element of fatigue is magnified in comparison to the baroque oboe, due to the more resistant construction of both reed and instrument.

An example of the difficulties faced by the players of the fifth sonata can be found in the final movement, where the bassoon has an uninterrupted solo of fifty-one measures. Passages of eighth, sixteenth, and thirty-second notes encompass a range of D to f′ with leaps that often cover the interval of the tenth. In the oboe parts, the range extends from b (a note which is not contained in the fingering charts of the era) to d′′′. The fugal third movement includes virtuosic passages for all three double reeds.

Table 3.2 External Organization of ZWV 181, no.5

Key	Tempo	Time Signature	Length in measures
F major	1. [Allegro] *	**2**	172**
g-v	2. [Adagio]	**C**	20
F	3. Allegro	**3**	269

*Tempo markings in the first and second movement are in the parts only. ** The first movement of the parts contains 344 measures in 2/4. The number of measures does not include repeats.

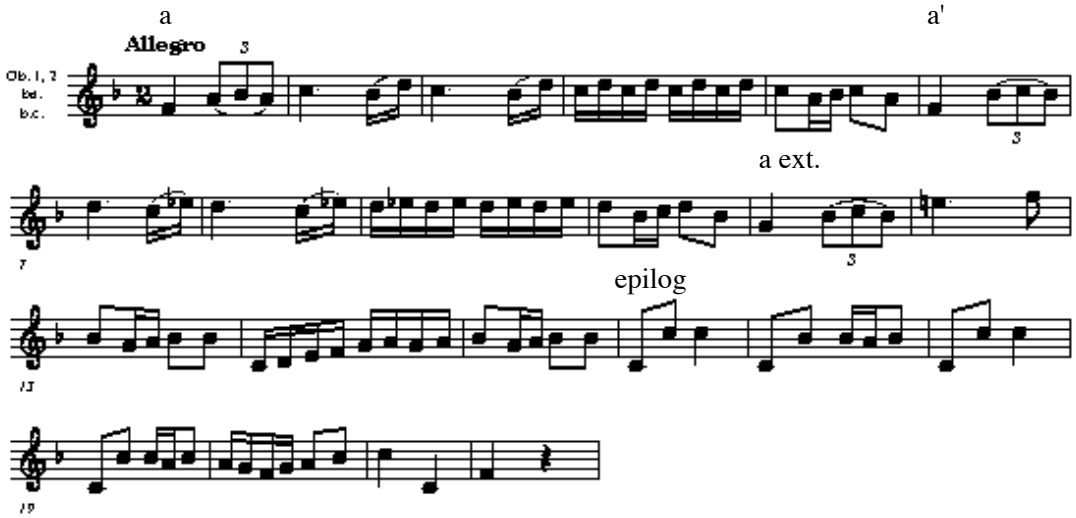
TABLE 3.3 FORMAL PLAN ZWV 181 no. 5, movement 1

Section	Key	Measures	Themes	Notes
R1	F	1-22	ritornello	unison texture
S1	F	22-36	s	
r	F	36-42	E	
S2	F-C	42-91	s and e	
R2	C	91-112	ritornello	unison for first 13 measures
S3	C-a	112-126	s and E	
r	a	126-132	E	
S4	a-d	132-159	s and e	b.c. drops out for 9 mm.
r	d-dim. 7th	159-165	E	
S5	*	165-248	s and e	b. c. drops out for 19 mm.
r	B-flat	248-253	V	
S6	B-flat	253-257-	s and e	
R3	F	257-286	a s a1 a2 s E	4 mm. solos enter after V + F
S7	F	286-335	s	
r	F	335-344	E coda	Rit. material in unison

R=complete Ritornello; r=segment of Ritornello; V=*Vordersatz*, E=*Epilog*, s=solo material, S=Solo section e=short segments of the *Epilog* *modulatory passage

In Zelenka's fifth sonata, I will concentrate on the first movement, as that is the movement in which the form is dictated by the use of the ritornello structure and meets the criteria for *sonate auf concertenart*.

Zelenka does not adhere to the three-part ritornello in the first movement of Sonata V; it does not display the melodic or harmonic sectionalization of Fischer's description. The ritornello is labeled according to its melodic segments in Example 3.1. The ritornello is divided into four segments of roughly equal length: two statements of a sequential *Vordersatz*, followed by an extension based on the same material, and finally closing or *Epilog* material.



Example 3.1 Ritornello from ZWV 181, no. 5, movement 1

In Zelenka's Sonata V, there are three complete presentations of the ritornello. The opening ritornello, as seen in Ex. 3.1, is played by the entire ensemble. The use of a unison ritornello utilizing all of the instruments in the ensemble to open a work is innovative as there is no differentiation of a solo and tutti group. Although the unison rendering of a late ritornello a movement that began with a non-unison version of that ritornello was a convention of the concerted sonata, the use of the unison ritornello for the first ritornello is rare.

In the second presentation of the ritornello in the first movement of Sonata V, the ritornello in the dominant is complete, but altered from its first appearance. In the majority of sonatas *auf concertenart,* most movements present an internal ritornello in the key of the dominant or relative minor that is orchestrated in the same way in which the initial statement was presented,

but the ritornello is not complete and does not reach tonal closure. The initial thirteen measures are in unison, after which the tutti instruments play a dominant chord, while the bassoon takes on the ritornello line as a soloist for one measure. The change of texture, where the bassoon plays the ritornello material as a soloist, blurs the line between solo and tutti material. The change is momentary, as the next measure continues with ritornello material, played by the entire ensemble in unison. The continuo takes over the ritornello material while the oboes fill out the dominant harmony in the subsequent measure. The role of the bassoon alternates between harmony and melody for the remainder of the ritornello, a pattern that continues for the remainder of the ritornello. The resultant effect is that the line between soloist and tutti is obscured.

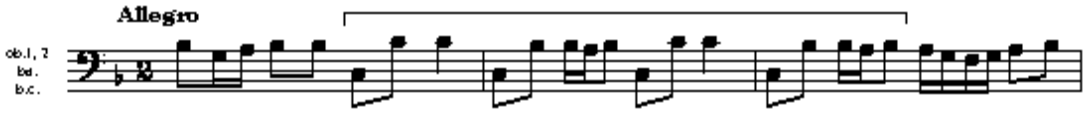
One hundred and forty-five measures separate the second and final complete statements of the ritornello, in which the solo episodes alternate with the *Epilog* portion of the ritornello. Within the episodic sections, segments of the *Epilog* material are integrated. The *Epilog* segment recurs frequently, its motivs divided into smaller cells and inserted in to the entire movement. This musical module appears to change function according to its context, even though its musical material remains the same. Zelenka presented essentially the same passage in two different functional guises: as ritornello material and as continuo material underscoring the solo line. The most surprising appearance of the *Epilog* occurs in its entirety in d minor, the

double reeds playing in unison while the continuo provides harmony. There is no closure to this statement; the audience has come to expect a cadence in the tonic, but instead, hears a diminished chord. The expectation of a cadence at the end of the segment is unfulfilled, and even the most inattentive listener would take notice of the change that signals the beginning of the lengthy, highly chromatic section.

The third and final ritornello comes back in the original key of F major, but is weakened by interjections of solo material. The episodic segments appear in all of the double reeds, each imitating each other at one-measure intervals. The ritornello material is presented in unison only, and lacks the embellishments of harmony and texture change that occurred in the second ritornello.

The ritornello in Sonata V includes an "unmistakable reference to the rhythm peculiar to the Polka".[107] The example that we see in the ritornello passage of Zelenka's is a German variant, and may have its roots in Bohemian dance (Ex. 3.2 in brackets). Authentic dances utilize syncopation and sometimes contain a string of straight eighth or sixteenth notes. In the German variant, we see repetitions of patterns such as eighth-sixteenth-sixteenth or eighth-eighth quarter.

[107]Stockigt, 106.



Example 3.2 from ZWV 181, no. 5, movement 1

Although Zelenka's use of ritornello and solo material within the *sonata auf Concertenart* can be compared to the earlier work of Vivaldi, the skill of the composer in his skill in combining aspects of the trio sonata and concerto sets him apart in his originality of invention. The astonishing virtuosity of the concertertante solo passages fills the listener with admiration for the woodwind players of the Dresden orchestra and the abilities of Zelenka as a composer.

PART THREE: THE OBOE AND BASSOON

The oboe was a newcomer to art music when Zelenka wrote his sonatas. In fact, the oboe had been adopted as a solo instrument for a mere twenty years when ZWV 181 was composed. Haynes states that Johann Fischer's *Musicalisch Divertissement*, published in Dresden in 1699/1700, is the earliest known German chamber music collection that lists the oboe as one of the instruments on which these pieces may be performed. Much of the solo music of the 18th century was written for the *traverso* or violin. The length of the movements in Fischer's work are short, and they may well better suited to the Flute or Violin, as it uses A♭, which can be achieved on the baroque oboe

by using an awkward fingering (see Tonality), but as the range does not exceed B♭ 2, its performance would have been possible.[108]

The first solos for oboe were those obbligato parts that accompanied the voice in opera arias.[109] The oboe was considered to be the instrument most like the voice in an early singing treatise by Tosi, and thus best suited for its accompaniment.[110] For this new expressive role, the instrument needed to play in a refined manner in order to make contrasts in tone, dynamics, and various shades of articulation by the direct and complete control of the reed with the player's embouchure. Direct control of such a reed produced an instrument whose special ability was to express short, intense musical gestures, to make quick and extreme changes of dynamics, frequent starts and stops, and striking tonal contrast between notes and within notes. It was also expected to be able to blend with the violins. In Dresden, there was a tradition of pairing the violins with the oboes in order to add strength and color, which necessitated the ability to blend.[111] The oboes new role was very different from its employment as a military instrument on horseback.

Although the oboe was a newcomer in the late baroque, the greatest quantity of music written for the oboe in the areas of solo and chamber works, was composed during the first third of the 18th century.[112] There were

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[108] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe*, 143.
[109] Ibid, *143*.
[110] Ibid., 19-20.
[111] Landmann, 26.
[112] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe, 275*.

also many works written for voice and obbligato oboe, and hautbois band. The Dresden library holds over 300 pieces from this era in which the oboe is featured, and at one time may have held more. In the 18th century, music was easily lost, as much of it remained in manuscript form, and was neither copied nor published. Over the past two hundred years, much of the library was damaged wrought by the fires set in Dresden by the Austrians and Prussians in the siege of 1760, the firebombing in 1945, and the possible Soviet pilfery of the Dresden archives. The amount of music that exists and quality of the extant music gives us only a vague idea of the variety and wealth of music that existed at the Augustan court.

Most of the music for oboe composed during the 18th century remained in manuscript form, as amateur oboists were not common, and there was limited interest in purchasing oboe solos. A great deal of oboe music was borrowed and adapted from music originally intended for other instruments. Oboe was often listed on a title page as an alternative to the violin, flute or musette. Only a small percentage of music was specifically written for the oboe. German composers were exceptional in that they were quite specific about instrumentation.

Music adapted for the oboe from other instruments is problematic for the two or three-keyed oboe in that the majority of music is written in sharp keys

and in a high range, whereas the majority of pieces composed for the oboe are within one accidental of F major/d minor.[113]

Specific Use of the Baroque Oboe in Zelenka's Sonatas

The Zelenka Sonatas utilize a slightly enlarged range if we compare these works to other works of the decade. The oboe's standard range in the 18th century was c1 to d3, and the performance beyond that range was the exception. Zelenka employed low B. It is not clear how this pitch would have been achieved other than lipping down C1, which, considering the note appears in quick succession to non-adjacent notes, would have been difficult at best. According to Geoffrey Burgess, it may have been possible to quickly cover the open holes in the bell with the performer's knees to approximate a b1.[114] No tutor of the time explains how to achieve this pitch, and only one included this note as a possibility. The greater difficulty in terms of execution comes in Zelenka's use of c#1. There was no fingering for the note, and producing it involved either the lipping up or over blowing of a C1, or half closing the c key. Another possibility lay in flexing the pitch of the dl down to c#. Either note would have involved significant embouchure adjustment. In the Sonata VI/3, m. 16 of the second oboe part, an additional problem lies in the fact that one d♭1 is followed by an e1, a combination which necessitated the sliding the pinky from the c key to the e♭ key, a chore which

[113] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 217.
[114] Burgess, 6.

is much more challenging on the baroque oboe than on the modern oboe. This is due, not only to the absence of a left hand eb key, but also to the fact that the flat, not rounded, which made sliding difficult. The db is preceded by a c1, which presumably was performed by lifting the Great key (the modern equivalent of a low C key) half way in order to raise the pitch of the c1. [115]

La Riche's presence at the Dresden court would have been a valuable resource to composers writing for the oboe. Seven fingering charts existed at the time of the composition of ZWV 181. Three of them are assumed to have been produced by LaRiche, an oboist who worked at the Dresden court in the early 18th century.

Tonality and Technical Limitations

The number of keys that suited the oboe of the 1720's was limited to those with few sharps or flats. There were limitations due to intonation problems and to the lack of a fully chromatic instrument, which were confining. All of Zelenka's trios have flat key signatures (F, g, B ♭, and c) and would have a dark tone color associated with the covered tone, which resulted from the use of cross or forked fingerings. These forked fingerings had to be manipulated with the embouchure in order to be played in tune, which would have created a muted or dark tone color. With the two or three-keyed oboe, the

[115] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 204-205.

tonality in which one plays is of the utmost importance, as it has a significant influence on both the technical fluency and tone quality of the performance.

A piece containing many sharps or flats had more covered notes than one in C major. In addition to the normal fingerings, the performer used alternate fingerings for trills and other ornaments that influenced the tone quality produced.[116] The quality of tone also varied with the range of the oboe. The higher range was somewhat brighter in quality due to the way by which the octave was produced (overblown octaves). There was more tension in the sound as the embouchure was tightened to produce a note in the upper tessitura, and the air speed greater, in order to compensate for a lack of an octave key. Zelenka would have had definite ideas about the physical qualities of various tonalities. Thus, his choice of keys for these Sonatas was well informed.

Contemporaries of Zelenka were critical of the oboe's limitations, and were aware that the quality of the performance was due in large part to a skilled player. Mattheson, author of *Der vollkommene Capellmeister,* made the sarcastic remark: "I would rather hear a good Jew's harp or musical comb [than]…the *Hautbois* [when] not played in the most delicate way".[117] In the introduction to Telemann's *Kleine Kammer-Music* of 1716, the experienced oboist writes about the criteria he took into consideration when composing for the instrument.

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[116] Bruce Haynes, *"The Oboe Solo before 1800; A Survey,"* Journal of the International Double Reed Society 17, 7-14.

[117] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe,* 271.

> I have limited the range as narrowly as possible…and avoided leaps of large intervals and covered or awkward notes; but have always sought, on the contrary, to bring out the brilliance and distinctness of this delicate instrument. In short, partly to spare the strength of the player, and partly not to tire the ear of the listener.[118]

Telemann is not entirely true to his word and his *Kleine Kammer-Music,* written for some of the finest oboists of the day, employs large leaps of intervals. Zelenka's works, however, include all the difficulties that Telemann states that he has avoided. Many of the movements in the Zelenka sonatas are extremely lengthy in comparison to similar works by his contemporaries. Performance of the Zelenka sonatas would have been a great challenge.

THE BASSOON

The bassoon plays an unusually large role as an obbligato instrument in Sonata V, which was unheard of in the trio sonata repertoire. Zelenka wastes no time in introducing the bassoon into its new role in Sonata V. ((In Sonata IV, the bassoon appears as a solo instrument for the first time in the third movement). The first solo in Sonata V begins promptly after the opening ritornello and is stated in a highly virtuosic manner by the bassoon. The bassoon part is anything but succinct; in fact, it frequently interrupts solo

[118] Haynes, *The Eloquent Oboe, 274.*

statements of the oboes. The traditional role of the highest voice in a trio sonata texture would be in the highest voice, but an apparent battle of wills takes place in the first movement. There are frequent interruptions and unexpected solos. For example, following the bassoon's first solos, the principal oboe restates the same material, and goes on to state new material, only to be superceded by the bassoon. To the listener, the bassoon could appear to have a secondary line, but in Zelenka's hand, the word solo is clearly written in the autographed part.

In Zelenka's sonatas, the bassoon emerges as an important voice, emancipated from the constraints of the continuo. The innovative treatment of the bassoon is present to some degree in several of the Zelenka sonatas, and becomes pronounced in the third movement of the fourth sonata. The composer writes markings of "tutti" and "solo" in the bassoon parts. They are absent in the score. The bassoon is given a prominent role as a soloist in each of the three movements of Sonata V.

The double reed sonatas of Jan Dismas Zelenka are among the most remarkable pieces of chamber music written for wind instruments. Extraordinary both in their dimensions and their demands on the performer, they fuse complex formal designs with spectacular virtuosity. They are responsible for a renaissance of Zelenka's music that brought the composer out of obscurity. The significance of Zelenka's work in the development of

early 18th century composition will only become apparent with further exploration of this elusive figure.

CONCLUSION

By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat down and there we wept
How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Psalm 137, v. 1 and 4

The Bohemian Zelenka spent most of his adult life creating music in a German Catholic Church on the banks of the Elbe. Within this environment, the heterodox Zelenka was peculiar in his devotion to his faith. The composer was the son of an organist and cantor trained by the Jesuits in Prague. "It is almost impossible to consider his later liturgical music, his style and emphases, Zelenka's career developments, and his personality without reference to the Society of Jesus, so strongly was he bound to and influenced by their religious, artistic, and cultural expressions."[119] Even though a Jesuit mission oversaw the Dresden church, it was a brotherhood greatly distrusted by the Lutherans of Saxony. Zelenka worked for a King that had converted to Catholicism for the sole reason that it made him eligible for the crown of Poland. In the atmosphere of a politically motivated state religion and a cultural distrust of the Jesuits, it is probable that Zelenka strove to find a voice that answered the needs of the Royal chapel without compromising his individual beliefs.

[119] Stockigt, 4.

There are no contemporary documents informing us of what Zelenka's relationships were within the complex society of the court. In 1861, the historian Fürstenau characterized Zelenka in this way:

> Contemporaries describe Zelenka as a reserved, bigoted Catholic, but also as a respectable, quiet, unassuming man, deserving of the greatest respect. It is probable that a secure, firm belief in the tenets of the Catholic Church in which Zelenka had been brought up and the rare appearance of manly solemnity and strict morality among the rather frivolous courtly activities, were interpreted as bigotry and reserve. Zelenka, however, seems to have lived a rather lonely and isolated life in Dresden. [120]

Several generations separate Fürstenau and Zelenka, and the portrait painted by the commentator may be partly founded on conjecture, but it is clear from extant petitions and documents that Zelenka did not get the recognition he sought.

Zelenka was one of the few Catholic musicians in Dresden, yet his Protestant colleague Heinichen had official charge of the music of the Royal Catholic Church. It was Zelenka's orthodox adherence to the stylistic and liturgical traditions of Vienna, the center of the Hapsburg monarchy, which resulted in criticism of his compositions by his superiors.[121] Upon Heinichen's death, and to the consternation of Zelenka, the post of *Kapellmeister* was left vacant for several years until another outsider, the famous opera composer Hasse, was appointed.

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[120] Moritz Fürstenau, *Zur Geschichte der Muisc und des Theaters am Hofe zu Dresden*, 2 vols. (Dresden, 1861; repr. 1971), 76-7.

[121] Stockigt, 67.

Zelenka's inexperience in composing opera may have made him a poor choice for the job he most desired. Zelenka was primarily a composer of sacred music and the majority of his works were written for the court chapel; however, the rulers who employed him were lovers of opera, a genre that Zelenka ill prepared to compose. His knowledge of the subtleties of the Italian language was apparently inadequate for the setting of aria texts, and his experiments in writing arias came late in life.[122] His few attempts at writing Italian opera arias were produced only when it became apparent that Hasse, the renowned opera composer, might be appointed to the post of *Kapellmeister*. This belated attempt at proving his potential in the area of opera composition was met with criticism by the famous singer (and wife of Hasse), Faustina, who was critical of the length and quality of the arias.[123] Zelenka's efforts to prove that he could satisfy the appetite for entertainment at Dresden failed.

Zelenka wrote works of substance, weight, great length, and difficulty where lighthearted music designed as a diversion was in vogue. He succeeded in finding a balance with the composition of the fifth sonata, in contrasting the buoyancy of the first movement, with the poignancy and passion in the slow movement, and the exciting fugue in the third movement. Zelenka utilized both antiquated and modern procedures in all of the Sonatas. His music is rife with references to earlier traditions, yet part of the

[122] Stockigt, 205.
[123] Stockigt, 205.

Sonatas' appeal lies in the solo episodes that he wrote in the style of a modern concerto. Constructed by means of the virtuosic techniques of the Italian Baroque, he utilized the progressive techniques used in the concertos of Vivaldi.

Zelenka differed strikingly from many other composers of his time, as he is not known to have worked as a keyboard player, and not a single piece of his for a solo keyboard instrument has survived. Unlike Telemann, Zelenka allowed himself to be confined to the composition of liturgical music, thus seeming to be without care for the commercial success of his music. There was a small market for Southern German Catholic music. In addition, the technical and interpretive demands of Zelenka's compositions were great, and would not have been appropriate for performers of modest ability, and therefore, not suitable for the primary market for printed music, the amateur musician.

As an employee of a German court, Zelenka was a participant in a culture that had adopted Italian opera and the musical manifestations of French Absolutism. Much of the music created at the Augustan court was used to entertain, but Zelenka allowed himself to be fettered by his role as a composer of sacred music. The opportunity to compose secular works was possible only when he was absent from the court. It is paradoxical that most of the instrumental works, the catalyst for the Zelenka renaissance, were written in Vienna and Prague at a time when he was relieved of the onerous

duties of the church. Freed from the responsibilities and conventions to which he was normally shackled, Zelenka wrote the pieces that saved the Bohemian composer from obscurity.

The ramifications for Zelenka's professional success (or lack thereof) due to his country of origin may have been significant. We do not know how the Bohemians were received in the early 18th century in the Saxon court. Were they treated as second class citizens? Did the fact that Zelenka was neither German, French, nor Italian prevent him from professional advancement? Would Zelenka have found it easier to sing to the Lord in his own land, where he could speak his native tongue and surround himself with the Jesuit society so pervasive in Prague? Would Zelenka have received greater recognition had he remained in service to the Clementinum? Bohemia offered few opportunities in regards to professional satisfaction for the early 18th century musician, leaving Zelenka no choice but to depart his native country. His early life had been spent in and around Prague, where he absorbed the societal and musical influences of Czech culture and language. The aristocracy that was not willing to convert to Catholicism was forced to emigrate; half the Protestant population of Bohemia settled in Saxony, rather than face oppression. (It is likely that among Zelenka's compatriots, he was in the religious minority.) The environment after the war of the White Mountains was destructive to Czech court culture, as the political center was

now located in Vienna. For professional and financial reasons, many musicians left their homeland, seeking better fortune elsewhere.

Zelenka strove to find a way to speak in a musical language that was true to himself while using the styles and traditions of the dominant culture to achieve his artistic and spiritual ambitions. Determined to find his way in a foreign land, a Catholic in Lutheran society, a devout man amongst a marginally religious aristocracy, and a composer of sacred music where secular music reigned supreme, Zelenka found a voice that is original, personal, and deserving of further exploration.

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